

## Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRASILIA 10260

E.O. 11652: XGDS1

TAGS: PFOR OAS BR XM

SUBJECT: BRAZILIAN OFFICIAL DISCUSSES OAS CHARTER REFORM AND SELA

REF: STATE 268707

SUMMARY. IN BACKGROUND DISCUSSION OF OAS AND SELA DEVELOPMENTS, FOREIGN MINISTRY'S CHIEF OF AMERICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS CLAIMED BRAZIL HAS TRIED TO PLAY MODERATING ROLE IN OAS CHARTER REVISION EXERCISE AND THAT HE SAW NEED FOR SPECIAL COMPROMISE-SEEKING FINAL REVIEW OF CHARTER REFORM PROPOSALS BEFORE THEY ARE SUBMITTED TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY. HE SAW CREATION OF SELA AS BOTH RESULT OF AND FACTOR IN CURRENT MALAISE IN OAS. WHILE HE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT OAS RENEWAL SOON, HE BELIEVED OAS IS NEEDED AND CAN HAVE USEFUL ROLE. DISCUSSING HIS EXPERIENCE AS DELEGATE TO SELA FOUNDING MEETING, HE WAS STRUCK BY EMOTIONALISM, HASTE AND EVEN "STEAM-ROLLER" TACTICS DISPLAYED THERE. HE  
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ACKNOWLEDGED THAT BRAZILIAN DELEGATION HAD FELT ISOLATED IN

QUESTIONING HSPANOPHONE PROPOSALS IT CONSIDERED EXTREME OR "SUPRANATIONAL", THOUGH SOME OTHER DELEGATIONS HAD EXPRESSED SUPPORT BEHIND SCENES. HE CALLED UNFOUNDED LINGERING IMPRESSION IN SOME QUARTERS THAT BRAZIL IS ANTI-SELA, THOUGH HE CAUTIONED THAT SELA'S VIABILITY IS STILL NOT ASSURED. END SUMMARY.

1. USING REFTTEL AS DEPARTURE POINT, POL COUNSELOR SOUGHT BRAZILIAN VIEWS IN CURRENT TRENDS IN OAS FROM AMBASSADOR CARLOS DUARTE, CHIEF OF FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DEPARTMENT OF AMERICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. DUARTE, WHO ALSO WAS CHIEF BRAZILIAN REPRESENTATIVE AT FOUNDING MEETING OF SELA IN OCTOBER, ALSO GAVE HIS IMPRESSIONS OF SELA'S FOUNDING MEETING AND SELA'S PROSPECTS.

2. DISCUSSING CONCERN EXPRESSED BY US REPRESENTATIVES OVER DIRECTION OAS CHARTER REVISION HAS TAKEN, DUARTE SAID BRAZIL HAS NOT BEEN IN FOREFRONT OF CHARTER REFORM MOVEMENT BUT HAS TRIED TO PLAY MODERATING ROLE. ONLY HALF JESTINGLY H ADDED THAT WHEN BRAZIL SEEKS MODERATE FORMULAS IN OAS, AS IT RECENTLY DID IN SELA, IT RISKS BEING ACCUSED AS "AGENT OF US INTEREST". WHILE CAUTIONING THAT HE WAS NOT CLOSELY INFORMED ON LATEST LANGUAGE OF PROPOSED CHARTER REVISIONS, HE FELT THAT BRAZIL IN MOST CASES WAS CLOSER TO FORMULATION PREFERRED BY US THAN TO THAT OF MORE NATIONALISTIC SPANISH-SPEAKING STATES, THOUGH THERE WERE PROBABLY SOME POINTS OF US-BRAZIL DISAGREEMENT. ACCORDING TO DUARTE, WHAT IS NEEDED IS A FINAL SUMMING-UP EXERCISE BY A PERMANENT COUNCIL OR SOME OTHER APPROPRIATE OAS ORGAN ON PROPOSED CHARTER REVISIONS BEFORE ANY EFFORT IS MADE TO SUBMIT NEW CHARTER TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY. HOPEFULLY THIS WOULD PROVIDE OCCASION FOR FRANK POINT-BY-POINT DISCUSSION OF MOST DISRUPTIVE ARTICLES WITH SERIOUS ATTEMPT AT COMPROMISE.

3. DUARTE SAW ENTIRE THREE-YEAR CHARTER REFORM EXERCISE AS SYMPTOMATIC OF CURRENT LACK OF CONSENSUS AND DIRECTION WITHIN OAS. HE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF RAPID REVERSAL OF THIS TREND. AS HE SAW IT, LATAMS HAD BEEN STIMULATED TO CREATE SELA BY INEFFECTUALLY OF OAS, AND NOW EXISTENCE OF SELA IN TURN CONTRIBUTES TO OAS WEAKNESS BY FURTHER DIVERTING FROM IT CONFIDENCE AND COOPERATION OF LATIN STATES. DUARTE RECALLED PREVAILING OPTIMISM AMONG LATAMS ABOUT OAS PROSPECTS FOR RENEWAL FOLLOWING ATLANTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND INAUGURATION OF NEW DIALOGUE. WHILE CONFIDENTIAL

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MUCH OF THIS OPTIMISM HAD WANED, BRAZIL'S VIEW WAS THAT OAS STILL IS NEEDED AND COULD HAVE A USEFUL ROLE. IF BRAZIL SEEMS LESS CONCERNED ABOUT OAS, HE EXPLAINED, IT IS BECAUSE POSITION OF OAS IN OVERALL CONTEXT OF BRAZILIAN FOREIGN POLICY WAS DIFFERENT FROM ITS PLACE IN OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES. ABSENT IN BRAZIL, HE ADDED, WAS TENDENCY AMONG OTHER LATIN AMERICAN STATES TO PLAY UP ACTIONS OF COUNTRY IN OAS FOR BENEFIT OF DOMESTIC IMPACT. THUS, OAS HAS NEVER HAD SIMILARLY HIGH PROFILE

IN BRAZIL, AND MOREOVER BRAZILIAN DIPLOMATIC STYLE IN SUCH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, HE CONCLUDED, HAS NORMALLY BEEN LOW-KEYED AND RESTRAINED.

4. TURNING TO SELA, DUARTE WAS STRUCK BY ENORMOUS "EMOTION" DISPLAYED BY SOME SPANISH-SPEAKING DELEGATES AT THE MEETING, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBGEAN. HE SAID SOME OF THEM WEPT AND EMBRACED EACH OTHER WHEN SELA WAS FORMALLY PROCLAIMED CALLING IT A "DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE". HE CHARACTERIZED THE PROCEEDINGS AT PANAMA AS FRENETIC AND HASTY, WITH THE MORE ENTHUSIASTIC SPANISH-SPEAKING MEMBERS "STEAM-ROLLERING" RESOLUTIONS THROUGH. THE SMALLER ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN STATES SEEMED TO HIM CONFUSED BY THESE TACTICS AND WERE AT TIMES CALLED UPON TO VOTE ON RESOLUTIONS FOR WHICH NO ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRANSLATION WAS PROVIDED.

5. AS THE BRAZILIAN REPRESENTATIVE, DUARTE FELT ISOLATED AT TIMES IN QUESTIONING SOME OF THE MORE FAR OUT PROPOSALS, BUT HE ADMITTED THAT THE NATIONALIST GROUP, INCLUDING THE CUBANS, HAD TREATED BRAZIL'S RESERVATIONS WITH GREAT SERIOUSNESS. HE MENTIONED IN THIS RESPECT BRAZIL'S CONSISTENT OPPOSITION TO SOME PROVISIONS IT REGARDED AS "SUPRANATIONAL". HE TOOK NOTE OF THE LINGERING BUT INCORRECT IMPRESSION IN SOME QUARTERS THAT BRAZIL IS AGAINST SELA. DUARTE REMARKED THAT SOME SPANISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF THE SOITHERN CONE, HAD TAKEN MORE PASSIVE ROLES AT THE MEETING, BUT SOME OF THEIR DELEGATES HAD TOLD HIM PRIVATELY THAT THEY WERE SYMPATHETIC TO VARIOUS BRAZILIAN POSITIONS EVEN THOUGH FOR REASONS OF HSPANOPHONE SOLIDARITY THEY WOULD NOT SPEAK UP FOR THEM PUBLICLY. HE RECALLED THAT INITIALLY THE CENTRAL AMERICAN GROUP AND SOME SMALLER CARIBBEAN STATES HAD BEEN RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT JAIME MONCAYO AS SECRETARY GENERAL BECAUSE THEY FEARED THAT AS AN ECUADOREAN HE MIGHT BE UNSYMPATHETIC TO A CENTRAL AMERICAN BANANA CARTEL. THE ULTIMATE CONFIDENTIAL

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SELA RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE CENTRAL AMERICAN ASPIRATIONS ON BANANAS WAS PART OF A TRADE-OFF TO GAIN THEIR ACCEPTANCE OF MONCAYO. THIS RESOLUTION IN TURN PRECIPITATED MOVES FOR SIMILAR SUPORTIVE RESOLUTIONS ON COMMODITY ISSUES SUCH AS A CUBAN-BACKED RESOLUTION ON CARIBBEAN SUGAR EXPORTERS AND A URUGUAYAN PROPOSAL ON MEAT.

6. DUARTE CONCLUDED THAT SELA'S FUTURE SURVIVAL IS NOT AT ALL CERTAIN IN VIEW OF MANY BASIC QUESTIONS STILL TO BE ANSWERED. HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT VENEZUELA COULD BE EXPECTED TO GO ON UNDERWRITING IT INDEFINITELY AND OTHER COUNTRIES HAD SHOWN NEITHER WILLINGNESS NOR ABILITY TO PICK UP FUTURE EXPENSES WHICH HE EXPECTED TO RISE STEADILY.

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## Message Attributes

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